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CONGRESS SECRETARIAT

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WORSENING SOCIO-ECONOMIC SITUATIONS: SIERRALEONE LABOUR CONGRESS (SLLC) POSITION STATEMENT

The Sierra Leone Labour Congress (SLLC) has observed that over the last couple of years prices of basic commodities have been on a steady increase which has seriously eroded the earning power of our members and the wider society. Consequently, this has negatively impacted on the standard of living of workers and their families to the extent that they can hardly afford a day's square meal.

The Labour Congress is similarly concerned about the increase in the prices of petroleum products over the years as well as the overburdening system of taxation, more particularly the Goods & Services Tax (GST).

All of these have further impacted the livelihood of workers and the general society as they could no longer cope with the harsh realities of the current cost of living in the country.

The Labour Congress is concerned that these continuous increases and their biting effects are not being cushioned by pro-people remedial measures by the State. This unmitigated economic situation is worsening inequality and poverty at individual, households and community levels. This situation is worrisome and dangerous predisposition that a fragile society like Sierra Leone can ill-afford.

In this regard, the Labour Congress wishes to draw government's attention to the following:

1. The steady increase in the cost of petroleum products
2. High cost of transportation
3. High prices of essential commodities including drugs and building materials
4. Low and stagnant salaries and wages for workers generally and particularly for public sector workers
5. The non-establishment of the Wages & Compensation Commission (WCC)
6. High taxation system

We urge the government to take measures, including opening genuine and constructive dialogue with critical stakeholders. In particular, the Congress considers the current situation very critical and anxiously looks forward to engaging the government towards seeking effective, inclusive and collaborative solutions in addressing the highlighted burning issues in the interest of all Sierra Leonean workers and people.

For: Sierra Leone Labour Congress

Max K. Conteh

Secretary General